

Introducing sorting

Once the children are beginning to look to match then earlier posting skills can be used to develop sorting. Sometimes this can take time as the children will just want to post without looking and thinking. Sorting colours comes relatively easy for children with Down syndrome and this is where we start; sorting contrasting colours, for example, red and yellow bricks into red and yellow containers.

Help by guiding their hand to the correct box and covering up the incorrect hole, say 'two in' – keep instructions and language basic and always use demonstration; remember they will learn by watching you.

Resources start with 1 and 2 and introduce other Numicon shapes as they learn them. Only sort between two shapes at a time to start with.

- A4 image of one and two, represented by Numicon and digit.
- Enough number 2 and number 1 Numicon shapes, stick the ones onto a square of cardboard using clear sticky tape, for each child. Place in a shiny bag – your 'number bag'
- Mixture of post boxes some large, some smaller (I use gravy tubs), some with a Numicon 1 attached, others with a Numicon 2 attached.

Activity

Following the number bag activity as detailed above set a 'one' box and a 'two' box in position on the A4 number mats alongside a small set of ones and twos





Start with the Numicon one shapes. Just before you post the shape briefly match it to the image on the box, bringing their attention to the fact that the one shape is going into the one box. Then repeat this with the two shapes.

Once both have all been posted, empty both boxes and mix the shapes up just a little and repeat, taking turns.

This may take time to grasp, some children pick it up relatively easily others can take months. Lots and lots of practice. Ensure they succeed - if needed stick with just matching for a while. Then bring in an additional step – have only one shape but boxes for both ‘one’ and ‘two’, then progress to having both shapes.

Such activities will continue as you keep introducing the next new number.

Later tubs can be labelled with numeral and then the child will be encouraged to match Numicon to numeral. See later notes.